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# CITIZEN AIRMAN

Volume 71 No. 3

June 2019

Saigon,  
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Patrick  
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## Against All Odds

From South  
Vietnam  
to the  
Air Force  
Reserve



Official Magazine of the Air Force Reserve

## ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT KEY TO MISSION READINESS, TAKING CARE OF AIRMEN



As a commander, my goals have always been to ensure mission readiness and enhance the quality of life for my Airmen. These are complex objectives, which can only be accomplished through multiple lines of effort. One initiative which substantially contributes toward both goals is organizational improvement.

It is also paramount that we keep the faith with our Airmen. Transparency is essential to increasing trust across our organization and improving our culture. Therefore, we must keep our people updated on current efforts and future projects. This includes both internal initiatives and Air Force, Department of Defense and Congressional actions which directly affect the Air Force Reserve.

One such action is a proposal to simplify the statutory authorities governing Reserve component service, which, if approved by Congress, will enhance our ability to support the joint force. The proposed duty status reform will also reduce the administrative burden on our Airmen and allow us to ensure continuous pay and benefits, such as health care, for members on orders, including deploying members.

However, this is not a quick fix. If approved, these reforms are expected to take several years to implement, because changing the current authorities will require modifications to multiple laws, instructions and regulations, as well as updates to pay and benefit systems.

Another, much simpler Congressional action concerning the Reserve Component is a bill which, if enacted, will remove the restrictions prohibiting federal employees from purchasing Tricare

Reserve Select. If this bill is signed into law, all members of the select Reserve, including Air Reserve Technicians, will be eligible for Tricare Reserve Select.

This will ensure all Reserve Citizen Airmen have access to the same health care options at the same price, when not on active-duty orders.

Both these initiatives ultimately depend on Congressional approval, and neither is assured. However, we can guarantee improvements to the many aspects of our organization which we do control.

We've already made significant improvements to our medical readiness and the associated processes and programs. As I'm sure you're well aware, at this time last year, the command had a backlog of more than 2,000 cases awaiting medical review. Today, that backlog is gone, and our medical review timeline has been reduced to less than 14 days.

We also revised the participation policy for members with duty limiting conditions. As of January, these individuals are no longer automatically placed in "no pay, no points" status and can participate in training within the limitations set by medical personnel, unless restricted by their commander on the basis of mission requirements, physical limitations and/or safety.

We recently started our next internal initiative, the reform of our manpower and personnel management processes

and programs. We are taking a holistic approach to improving this critical component of our organization, which directly impacts every mission set and every Reserve Citizen Airman.

At the same time, we began tackling an issue which has frustrated many – travel pay.

Organizational improvement is a collective effort. Our operational readiness and our ability to support our Airmen will only be maximized if we optimize our effectiveness at every level. Every unit, from the smallest flight to the largest numbered Air Force, has internal policies and programs, which are controlled by unit personnel and can be improved by unit personnel. While individual influence varies, every Airmen has the power to enhance some aspect of our organization.

We will continue our efforts to increase our readiness and improve the quality of life for our Airmen at the command level. I encourage every Reservist to do the same in his or her unit. ■

**RICHARD W. SCOBEE**  
Lieutenant General, USAF  
Chief of Air Force Reserve  
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command

## ENLISTED FORCE LINES OF EFFORT WILL HELP US MEET STRATEGIC GOALS



Since being selected as the command chief, I have been routinely asked about my focus areas for the enlisted force. At first, I was a little hesitant to establish focus areas because our priorities of prioritizing strategic depth while accelerating readiness, developing resilient leaders and reforming the organization have been clearly defined by our commander, Lt. Gen. Scobee.

In addition, our priorities directly aligned with the strategy and priorities of the National Defense Strategy, the Air Force, the chief of staff and the chief master sergeant of the Air Force.

After careful consideration, I have established three individual lines of effort that should help us meet our strategic priorities. Here they are:

**Line of Effort 1 - Comprehensive Readiness.** Readiness is primarily measured in terms of personnel and equipment. Comprehensive readiness, or Readiness 360, focuses on the whole Airman and all the things Airmen worry about while downrange.

Comprehensive readiness includes, but is not limited to, family support services, peer support, employer relations, child-care, physical and mental health, and financial stability. Providing full-spectrum readiness for Airmen in garrison will accelerate readiness for Airmen before they deploy.

**Line of Effort 2 - Deliberate Talent Management.** We are standing up a senior enlisted leader management group at the Pentagon that will help mentor, develop and guide career paths for senior enlisted personnel with command chief master sergeant (9E100), group superintendent (9G100) and key developmental senior enlisted position (9D100) identifiers.

This top-down approach will ensure we have senior enlisted leaders with the strategic mindset, experience and emotional intelligence to lead at all levels. This leadership-by-design, not by-default, approach will provide our organization with resilient leaders to compete and win in any environment.

**Line of Effort 3 - Organizational Trust.** Restoring a culture of trust remains a top priority for Lt. Gen. Scobee and me. We have to have organizational trust to attract and retain the talented Reserve Citizen Airmen who are combat credible and always ready to answer our nation's call.

We are committed to excellence and devoted to reducing bureaucracy, removing barriers and placing the correct faces in

spaces to improve organizational behavior and performance.

With your help, we have made significant gains in the medical community and are currently devoting our time, energy and resources into the personnel and financial management areas. Trustworthy leadership that is transformational and not transactional will foster an environment where organizational trust and purpose-driven collaboration can thrive.

You will hear more about these lines of effort in the future. In the meantime, I would like to hear your thoughts at [afrc.ccc@us.af.mil](mailto:afrc.ccc@us.af.mil).

It's an honor and privilege serving as your command chief! ■

**TIMOTHY C. WHITE JR.**  
Chief Master Sergeant, USAF  
Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of Air Force Reserve  
Command Chief Master Sergeant, Air Force Reserve Command



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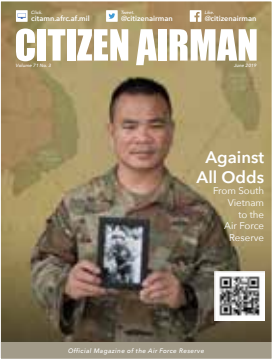
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*Lt. Col. Asan Bui, 920th Communications Flight commander, holds a photo of his late father, Chien Van Bui, at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. Bui has a lot of respect for his father, who served in the South Vietnamese Army during the Vietnam War. The lieutenant colonel is now a part of the 920th Rescue Wing, a combat-search-and-rescue unit in the Air Force Reserve. See his story on page 26.*

*(Photo by Senior Airman Brandon Kalloo Sanes, background illustration by Anthony Burns)*



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*Lt. Col. Shad Stromberg, an F-35 pilot in the 419th Fighter Wing, steps to his jet for a nighttime deployment departure to Al Dhafra Air Base, United Arab Emirates, from Hill Air Force Base, Utah. (Senior Airman Justin Fuchs)*

# Making History

## Hill Airmen depart for F-35A's first Middle East deployment

419th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Pilots, maintainers and support personnel from the Air Force Reserve's 419th Fighter Wing and the active duty 388th Fighter Wing deployed from Hill Air Force Base, Utah, to Al Dhafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates in April – the first Middle East deployment for the Air Force's F-35A Lightning II.

The group is made up of personnel from the active duty 4th Fighter Squadron and Reserve 466th Fighter Squadron, as well as Airmen from their respective aircraft maintenance units and a variety of F-35 support personnel. They will support efforts underway throughout U.S. Air Forces Central Command.

"Having converted from flying the F-16 and being with the F-35 program here at Hill from the very beginning, this deployment is a huge milestone," said Lt. Col. Shad Stromberg, F-35 pilot in the 419th FW. As Stromberg's eighth deployment, he said he hopes to be able to share his experience with some of the younger pilots. "It's really important to be able to lean on

someone and learn from those who've been there before."

When Stromberg isn't in uniform, he's a civilian pilot with Delta Air Lines.

"It's exciting to be on this historic first F-35A deployment to the Middle East," said Senior Airman Caleb Shumway, a weapons load crew member in the 419th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. "For us here at Hill, we practice loading munitions for these kinds of missions on a regular basis. The only difference for us this time around is that we're taking these skills overseas."

When he's not serving part time in the Air Force Reserve, Shumway is a construction worker and business marketing student.

The F-35A is the Air Force's conventional takeoff and landing variant of the Department of Defense's Joint Strike Fighter fleet. It provides greater operational capability by combining advanced stealth capabilities with the latest weapons technology.

"We are adding a cutting edge weapons system to our arsenal



*Top: Airmen from the Air Force Reserve's 419th Fighter Wing and active duty 388th FW board a plane headed to Al Dhafra. (R. Nial Bradshaw) Bottom Left: Stromberg runs a pre-flight check prior to takeoff. (Senior Airman Justin Fuchs) Bottom Right: Rylan, 4, helps keep the mood light as her father, Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Smith from the 419th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, prepares to deploy.*

that significantly enhances the capability of the coalition," said Lt. Gen. Joseph T. Guastella, commander of U.S. Air Forces Central Command. "The sensor fusion and survivability this aircraft provides to the joint force will enhance security and stability across the theater and deter aggressors."

The F-35A is designed with the entire battlespace in mind, and is intended to fuse, integrate and share data with other battlefield assets. It has one of the most powerful and comprehensive integrated sensor packages. It improves lethality, survivability and adaptability against emerging threats in order to maintain air superiority.

"The F-35A provides our nation air dominance in any threat," said Gen. David L. Goldfein, chief of staff of the Air Force. "When it comes to having a 'quarterback' for the coalition joint force, the interoperable F-35A is clearly the aircraft for the leadership role," he said.

F-35A aircraft and personnel from Hill AFB previously deployed to Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, in April 2017, as well as the U.S. Pacific region in the fall of 2017.

"As a total force effort with a mix of active duty and Reserve

Airmen working side by side, this is no different than what we do on a day-to-day basis here at Hill," said Col. Gina Sabric, 419th FW commander. "We train together and fight together, and as the first deployment for the F-35A to the Middle East, I'm 100 percent confident we'll deliver."

Sabric also thanked the civilian employers of Reservists who understand the importance of this mission and allowed them to take leave from their civilian jobs to serve in their military capacity.

The 419th FW and 388th FW are the Air Force's only combat-capable F-35 units, maintaining the jets in a Total Force partnership that utilizes the strengths of both components. Hill AFB is slated to be home to 78 aircraft by the end of 2019.

*(Portions of this story were taken from a U.S. Air Forces Central Command news release.)*



# Comprehensive Fitness

Exercise physiologists can help Reserve Citizen Airmen achieve it

By Bo Joyner



*Ken Duhart, 94th Airlift Wing exercise physiologist, gives feedback during interval training at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia, Fit Camp. (Tech. Sgt. Andrew Park)*

Reserve Citizen Airmen are going to be in the fight, in any environment and they will need comprehensive fitness to succeed. As the fitness and resilience program coordinator for Air Force Reserve Command, Jason Ham wants to spread the word about a valuable comprehensive fitness resource available at each of AFRC's 10 host units.

"A lot of people don't know we have exercise physiologists at each of our host bases and their services are available free of charge to military members, Defense Department civilians and family members," Ham said during a recent interview at AFRC headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia.

Exercise physiologists are health professionals who specialize in physical exercise and how it contributes to all-around good health. They know the effects exercise has on all of the body's various systems and can provide a course of exercises for either fitness or rehabilitation.

"All 10 of our exercise physiologists have graduate-level degrees in kinesiology and are board certified from the American College of Sports Medicine. They are the gold standard in the field and line up with the top people in the private sector," Ham said. "Exercise physiologists are usually located at hospitals or at human performance settings like professional sports teams and



their services usually cost quite a bit of money. We have them available for free to members of the Reserve team at all of our host units."

Ham said that while the exercise physiologists manage the fitness assessment cells on their installations, they do much more than just conduct the fitness assessments for military members.

"They are not personal trainers," he said. "They have the knowledge and skills to prevent injuries, to spot postural dysfunctions or biomechanical dysfunctions and they can remove some of the areas that tend to be a pitfall in an exercise program. They can help identify the best training option for an individual and then help tweak the program as it evolves, helping a person understand his or her body and response to physical training."

Senior Airman Garri Johnson, who works for the 910th Mission Support Group at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, had failed three Air Force fitness assessments when she was introduced to Matthew Gruse, Youngstown's exercise physiologist. Failing a fourth fitness test would have put her in danger of being discharged from the Reserve.



*Duhart watches a Dobbins Fit Camp participant complete an exercise. Duhart offers several fitness classes throughout the week to help Airmen and their family members stay physically fit. (Tech. Sgt. Andrew Park) Right, Matthew Gruse, exercise physiologist for the 910th Airlift Wing, Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, discusses beep test results with Lt. Col. Susan Gutlove, clinical nurse with the 910th Medical Squadron, and Col. Sharon Johnson, 910th Maintenance Group commander. (Eric M. White)*

Gruse conducted assessments on Johnson to establish a fitness baseline. The assessments included height, weight and abdominal circumference measurements, push-ups following a metronome rhythm, sit-ups without a toe-bar to establish core strength and overhead squats. The exercises are simple, but a trained eye observing movement mechanics helps identify trouble areas.

"We can figure out, biomechanically, the deficiencies a person has," Gruse said. "If you want to set somebody up with a run program, you have to get down to the nitty gritty, because you can predict injuries."

For example, Gruse said if a person's arms fall forward during the overhead squat, he can predict the Airman has tight lats, the large back muscles that stretch to the sides, and is probably a little weaker in the core. Addressing those deficiencies can help improve overall fitness.

"The important part is when you start running and you don't account for all these little deficiencies you have," Gruse said. "They can compound."

Once baseline assessments are complete, Gruse can point people in the right direction toward their fitness goals, recommending exercises and fitness programs.

"We're trying to capture stuff like that and set them off," he said. "We're not necessarily writing the program for them. We're giving them all the tools they need when they decide on a program."

That's just what Gruse did for Johnson. Following the program he helped her create, she scored a 93 on her last fitness assessment.

Johnson said now she won't do anything fitness related without consulting with Gruse first.

"If I did it on my own, I'd be all over the place," she said.

Gruse said he loves getting to play a role in transformation stories like Johnson's.

"It's fun watching the turnarounds, because people get so excited," Gruse said. "They realize it takes hard work, but it's

really not as hard as you think it's going to be. It's just getting the consistency down."

To Airmen who are struggling with fitness goals, Johnson offers some advice: "Don't be afraid to ask."

Ken Duhart, the exercise physiologist for the 94th Airlift Wing, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia, said finding the right exercise program can be especially challenging for Reservists, who might struggle with fitness due to a busy lifestyle balancing family, friends and civilian job responsibilities.

"Reservists, being part-time, don't have as much time for training compared to active-duty military members," he said. "I encourage lifestyle changes for Reservists and advise them to start fitness workouts at least 90 days prior to testing along with nutrition and test-specific training."

"Many people say they don't have time for fitness. I tell people with the hours of time they spend on their phones, they can focus on spending only 30 minutes to an hour a day three times a week on fitness."

Exercise is just one part of the equation when it comes to living a healthy lifestyle, Duhart said. Nutrition is another facet of healthy living that Duhart said is very important for overall success. He teaches a basic nutrition strategy centered on eating five small meals a day, eating more fruits, vegetables, nuts and proteins, drinking more water, and staying away from things like soft drinks.

"Members have to maintain a good lifestyle being part-time warriors," he said. "You will have a better lifestyle if you utilize the resources and facilities we have here and keep it simple. We are here to help build resilient Airmen. Look beyond the test. Look to us for your lifestyle change. Mental health, physical health and overall well-being are important."

*(Eric M. White, 910th AW public affairs office, and Senior Airman Justin Clayvon, 94th AW public affairs office, contributed to this story.)*





## What every Reservist should know about AGR assignments



By Col. Belinda Peterson

Recently, Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee, the chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command, approved changes to the Active Guard Reserve program which are expected to be implemented later this year.

The implementation of the new policy is expected to take place with the publishing of a new Air Force Instruction. Until the new policy is published, here are the top 10 things Reserve Citizen Airmen should know or can expect with the new program.

10. There are currently 3,849 AGR positions in the Air Force Reserve. AGR positions are located at every wing across the Air Force Reserve Command and at other major commands. In addition, there are AGR positions within the Recruiting Service at most Air Force bases. By 2020, an additional 1,277 AGR positions will be added.

9. AGR members receive the same benefits and entitlements as their active-duty counterparts, including pay, leave and medical. "Additionally, each year a member is on AGR orders is 365 points towards Reserve retirement. If a member is pursuing a Reserve retirement, it is a huge boost for him or her," said Capt. Matthew Harding, AGR Assignments Branch chief.

8. Anyone can apply for an AGR

position, including individual mobilization augmentees, traditional Reservists, Air Reserve Technicians, Guard members and active-duty Air Force members. All complete applications are forwarded to the hiring official regardless of an applicant's status. The hiring official selects the best qualified applicant among all applicants.

7. There are vacant AGR positions from staff sergeant to colonel. In addition to applying for positions of their rank, enlisted members can apply for positions that are one above or one below their rank. If an applicant is selected for a position that is one above the rank, he or she must complete all requirements including time in grade to be eligible for promotion to the next higher grade. If an applicant is selected for a position that is one below the rank, he or she must be willing to accept that rank to work in that position. Officers can apply for positions of their rank or one above. If an applicant is selected for a position that is one above, he or she must be selected from a promotion board and complete all requirements before promoting to the next higher grade.

6. Most AGR positions at the unit level will initially be a four-year order with the option to extend or curtail based on a request from the member and mission needs. The approval authority for

extensions and curtailments will be the wing commander or equivalent.

5. The following AGR positions will remain three-year tours – special duty; overseas; headquarters for O-4 and above and E-7 and above; all O-6; designated key, command and joint for officers; and key and strategic for enlisted members. However, the same extension and curtailment policy will be applied for these positions as with unit positions with wing commanders or equivalent as the approval authority.

4. For O-5 and below key, command and joint positions, the hiring official will select the best qualified applicant. The hiring official will receive all applications from the Key, Command and Joint Management Office at ARPC that will also include career field manager feedback and applicants who have been identified on a key personnel list from the respective developmental team board.

"We have implemented a more deliberate process to develop future senior leaders in key positions or positions like command and JDAL (Joint Duty Assignment List) so that these members can gain breadth of knowledge needed to support Air Force needs and the secretary of defense's priority of strengthening joint leaders," said Maj. Nate Cole, Key, Command and Joint Management Branch chief.

3. ARPC will no longer hold an AGR review board with generals at the Pentagon and Air Force Reserve Command. Instead, career program decisions will be delegated to the wing commander or equivalent to allow for more flexibility for the wing commander to make decisions at different gates. If a career program decision has not been made at a member's five-year point in the same assignment, the wing commander will make a career program entry decision. It will be automatic for those selected for a follow-on assignment exceeding the six-year probation period.

2. Before a member enters a career program, he or she will need to sign a statement of understanding to include a mobility statement similar to a statement of understanding that an Air Reserve Technician would sign. The statement of understanding will also include information on certain positions that will always be three-year tours (see number five), limited opportunities in non-sustainable career fields, force development and outplacement priority consideration after returning from a different status. Once in the career program, a member may serve until his or her mandatory separation date or high year tenure date. This will eliminate the need for an AGR review board-like decision for greater than 20 years of active duty service.

1. To find all vacant O-5 and below AGR positions, go to myPers at [https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/35663](https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/35663).

"Both my AGR Assignments Branch and Key, Command and Joint Management Branch are working hard to ensure the new policy will be implemented in time later this year," said Col. Jena Silva, director of assignments. "We are excited about the new changes because it gives more flexibility for commanders while making it more attractive for our Reserve members. And since this program is growing significantly, we have a need to recruit new AGRs and retain our talented AGRs."

*(Peterson is the individual mobilization augmentee to the ARPC deputy commander.)* ■



## Air Force switching to two-line promotion recommendation forms for officers

*(Editor's note: In an effort to ensure Reserve Citizen Airmen stay up-to-date on personnel information important to them, Citizen Airman will run regular features from the Air Reserve Personnel Center in the magazine. Look for the ARPC header (above) to identify important personnel news.)*

The Air Force is transitioning to a new two-line promotion recommendation form for officers, effective in September.

This initiative, which impacts the total force, was approved by the secretary of the Air Force in April and will be implemented by the Air Reserve Component during the calendar year 2019 USAFR colonel promotion board, convening Oct. 21.

Senior raters may present their comments in bullet format and content will be reduced from nine lines to two lines, clearly communicating to the promotion board why the board should or should not promote an officer.

Promotion recommendation forms were created with the intent to document the senior official's performance-based assessment of an officer's potential to serve in the next higher grade. In order to abide by the original intent of the promotion recommendation form and provide full transparency to officers, this new initiative focuses on the documented record of performance and enhances the senior rater's voice directly to the promotion board.

The promotion recommendation form will no longer be a summary of information contained in the officer's record, but instead will allow the senior rater to provide performance-based differentiation and characterization of the eligible officer's potential to serve in the next higher grade.

Comments or pushes for items that are decided through other processes or means such as developmental education and assignments are not authorized on the new promotion recommendation form.

Stratification guidelines for promotion recommendation forms have also changed and provide the promotion board a better potential-based differentiation of officers. The use of stratification statements from anyone other than the senior rater is prohibited and a senior rater may not quote stratification from another evaluator or source.

For information and guidance regarding the changes to the promotion recommendation form, visit the ARPC website or search "officer promotions" in myPers.



# Continuity and Expertise

## Reserve instructors helping train future AC-130J crews for special ops missions

By Maj. Amanda Reeves

At Hurlburt Field, Florida, the Air Force's newest close-air support weapons system looms large on the flight line.

The AC-130J gunship offers a wide array of capabilities for CAS in the battlespace, boasting the most modern technology, from its munitions to its communication suite. At its helm is a team of quiet professionals – Reserve Citizen Airmen who are sharpening the tip of this lethal spear.

The 5th Special Operations Squadron works hand-in-hand with its active-duty counterparts to train the Air Force's most capable gunship aircrews on this cutting-edge platform.

Part of the 919th Special Operations Wing, the Air Force Reserve's only special operations wing, the 5th SOS has always embodied total force integration. With this new mission, however, the 5th SOS has paved the way for the Reserve to claim a piece of the Air Force's modernization efforts, rather than maintaining the capabilities of legacy systems.

"The primary mission of the 5th SOS

is to provide instructor cadre to the 19th Special Operations Squadron and teach the next generation aviator how to safely and effectively employ the weapon system," said Maj. Matthew Dempsey, 5th SOS assistant operations officer.

"(Our participation) in the AC-130J program provides invaluable continuity and expertise to the students, the school-house, and the operational units and users. Having been involved early allows our unit to watch as the weapon system grows and adapts."

The first Reserve instructors began training on the new platform Feb. 25. By the end of 2019, they will be fully certified and working alongside their active-duty counterparts to train both new instructors and operational crews.

No strangers to the flight training unit, the 5th SOS has been producing gunship aircrews for years. The small cadre has accumulated more than 50,000 AC-130H/U flying hours and more than 10,000 instruction flying hours.

"With the exception of the patch on

our uniforms, our students generally do not know if their instructor is active duty or Reserve," Dempsey said. "That speaks volumes to the commitment of Air Force Reserve Command and Air Force Special Operations Command for working together towards a common goal."

That professionalism and spirit of cooperation played a large role in securing the 5th SOS's billets for the AC-130J program. Over the course of two and a half years, the 5th SOS worked closely with both AFRC and AFSOC to advocate for the Reserve's involvement in standing up the new program.

"We were able to show the enormous amount of gunship talent and experience that would be lost if we weren't a part of the program," said Master Sgt. Christopher Sentilles, 5th SOS superintendent. "We are leveraging that experience to shorten the time requirements for instructors to upgrade in the AC-130J. Efforts like this will ensure we maintain a true TFI enterprise moving forward."

Forging new paths seldom comes



without challenges, however, and the 5th SOS has demonstrated tremendous resiliency and innovation in order to accomplish the mission. In addition to the familiar struggles of meeting full-time training requirements on part-time schedules, the Citizen Air Commandos of the 5th SOS were also required to carve a unique place for the Reserve in a primarily active-duty setting.

"Many of the draft regulations on the AC-130J do not yet include (AFRC) caveats, so we worked with our leadership to find the best way forward to continue to provide experienced and qualified instructors into 2030 and beyond," Dempsey said.

With a proven track record of training one-third of the FTU's students, the 5th SOS hopes to maintain the same throughput despite the accelerated goal production rate for AC-130J crews.

Currently, the 5th SOS has three instructor aircrews – one full-time crew comprised of Active Guard Reserve billets and two part-time crews comprised of

traditional Reservists. To meet the FTU's needs, AFSOC is already requesting to double the number of Reserve crews.

"The 5th SOS helps support the 19th SOS in producing combat-ready crews," Sentilles said. "The relationship we have with each other is respected and cherished and never taken for granted. This speaks volumes to our strict hiring qualifications, values and standards."

As true TFI partners, the Citizen Air Commandos of the 5th SOS have ensured the Reserve's place at the forefront of the Air Force's future. Increasing readiness, improving lethality and championing innovation, these quiet professionals prove to be an invaluable tool in supporting the warfighter against those who wish to do America harm.

*(Reeves is assigned to the headquarters AFRC public affairs office. She wrote this story while on duty with the 919th SOS public affairs office.)*

*Maj. Matthew Dempsey and Master Sgt. Christopher Sentilles, 5th Special Operations Squadron, pose with the AC-130J, the Air Force's newest close air support weapon system, at Hurlburt Field, Florida. The 5th SOS augments the AC-130J Flight Training Unit, providing Reserve full- and part-time instructor aircrews for the program. These Reserve Citizen Airmen are responsible for training Reserve and active-duty crews alike. (Tech. Sgt. Kentavis Brackin)*





# Reforming the Organization

## What role do diversity and inclusion play?

By Bo Joyner

Lee Floyd, Air Force Reserve Command's chief diversity and inclusion officer, speaks at a Black History Month celebration at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport in Newport, Rhode Island, in February. Floyd is charged with making sure diversity and inclusion are ingrained into everything the Air Force Reserve does. (Rich Allen, McLaughlin Research Corp.)

*(Editor's note: As Air Force Reserve Command's Diversity and Inclusion officer, Lee Floyd is on a mission to tell Reserve Citizen Airmen across the command how diversity and inclusion are vital to AFRC's mission of providing combat-ready forces to fly, fight and win. We recently sat down with Floyd and asked him how inclusion and diversity fit in with AFRC Commander Lt. Gen. Richard Sco-bee's vision of reforming the organization. Here's what we learned.)*

Lee Floyd is not a bean counter. As the chief of AFRC's Diversity and Inclusion Branch, he is way more interested in making sure diversity and inclusion are ingrained into the very fiber of the Air Force Reserve than he is with how many African Americans or women are wearing Reserve blue.

"It's important the Air Force Reserve represents the diverse population we serve, but it's much more important that we include all of the different skillsets, experiences and cultures all of our people bring to the table. A diverse work force is no good if we don't celebrate what makes us different and allow people with different points of view or ideas to contribute to the mission."

Floyd likes analogies. He compares the Reserve mission to a campfire and the people sitting around the fire to the members of the Air Force Reserve team. "Everybody has a log they can put on the fire, but if I'm reluctant to put my log on the fire or if somebody doesn't let me put my log on the fire, that fire is never going to burn like it should. And pretty soon, it's going to burn

out. It's the same with the Air Force Reserve mission. Everybody on the Reserve team has something unique to offer to the mission and we have to make them feel like they are a valuable part of the team so they will be willing to contribute."

One analogy Floyd does not like is the one that likens the United States to a melting pot. In a melting pot, everything that goes in is transformed into something that is the same throughout and very different from the individual parts that went in. "That's not what we want," he said. "A much better analogy is a salad bowl where a tomato can be a tomato and lettuce can be lettuce and they both bring a unique taste that adds to the overall flavor of the salad without losing their own individual flavor."

Floyd said diversity is an inherent strength of the Air Force Reserve. "We have a diverse work force because we have people from all walks of life who serve," he said. "We have everything from CEOs of companies to top engineers and scientists to experienced pilots serving in the Air Force Reserve. The key is to make sure we value the diversity everyone brings to the table, so they will want to remain a part of the team."

Floyd said one diversity-related issue the Reserve is constantly facing is how to get people from different generations to work well together and value what members of each generation can contribute.

"A lot of young companies today are made up almost entirely of people from one or two generations, so they all can relate well with one another. Depending on which chart you look at, we have people from four or five different generations working for the Air Force Reserve," he said. "And baby boomers are way different from millennials and youngsters from Generation Z. The key is for everyone to realize that while they may be different, they all have something valuable to contribute to the team."

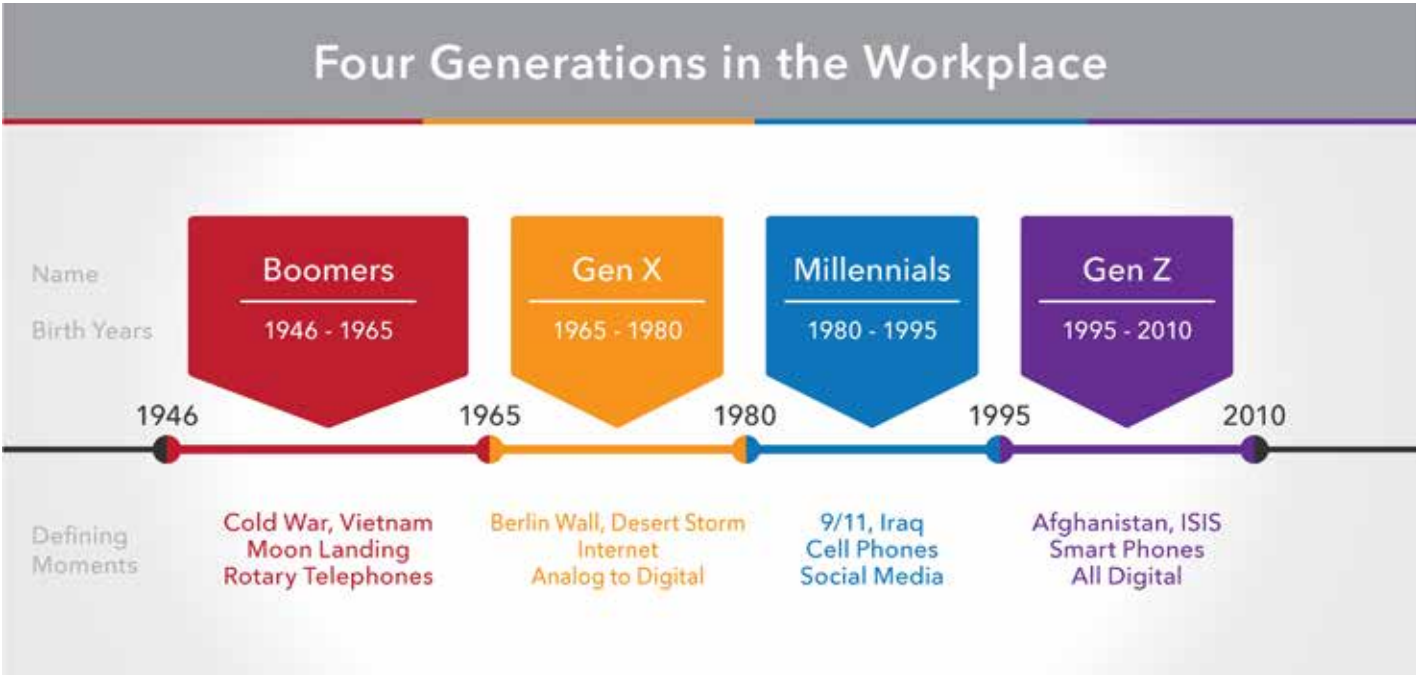
"The bottom line is we are trying to introduce a way of thinking that causes leaders, managers and unit personnel to consider

diversity and inclusion's value, risk and relative priority as a fundamental element of organizational development."

Currently the command is engaged in two training initiatives in the area of diversity and inclusion. Diversity 101 is a two-hour interactive course designed to bring about individual self-awareness and understanding of the role they play in mission accomplishment. This one-time training for all members of the Reserve team meets the mandated requirement set forth in Air Force Instruction 36-7001.

Reserve units at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia; Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio; Homestead ARB, Florida; Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina; and Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport ARS, Minnesota, have all started diversity and inclusion training for wing personnel.

Diversity and Inclusion Program Manager's Training is a two-day training seminar where wing and group vice commanders and their respective program executors receive diversity and inclusion awareness training as well as the ABCs of running a wing-level diversity program. Included in the training are diversity and inclusion council development, business case development, outreach and marketing strategies to including funding requests submissions, and data gathering, tracking and reporting roles and responsibilities. ■







# Hand-picked

## Air Force selects Reserve Citizen Airmen to lead maintenance app development

By Master Sgt. Meredith Mingledorff

Aircraft maintainers from the Air Force Reserve's 924th Fighter Group have been hand selected to beta-test the new Battle Record Information Core Environment application for the entire Air Force.

Maj. Gen. Cedric D. George, the Air Force's director of logistics, visited the 924th FG at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, in late March, about a year after maintainers from the 924th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron were charged with testing the BRICE app. George called the squadron "unapologetically visionary."

The BRICE app is an iOS-approved application that brings technical data, forms and other tools to Airmen on the flight line on a tablet. The app saves maintainers from having to walk back and forth to the tool crib or office for computer access, improving flight readiness and data entry, and shortening turnaround time for routine maintenance.

"Our Airmen are empowered to make decisions at the lowest levels and are encouraged to tell us what they need to get the mission done," said Col. Brian Cusson, 924th FG commander. "We've

built this fighter group from scratch and the Air Force picked the perfect squadron to demonstrate how to bring the future faster."

Reserve Citizen Airmen at the 924th are dedicated to innovation and reforming the organization, using new technology to shorten maintenance production times and reduce costs by improving efficiency.

"Since the beginning, our folks have always leveraged innovation to do more with less while optimizing the advantages of our seamless total force maintenance team here at DM," Cusson said.

The total force effort combines the talents of active-duty Airmen, Reservists, civilian employees and government contractors from Amazon Web Services, Apple, Verizon, Monkton and other companies that are providing the architecture and hardware for BRICE. The app is supported by the Defense Information Systems Agency, Air Force headquarters and AFRC logistics offices that manage the program.

After experimenting with the app for about a year, the maintainers were invited



to provide direct feedback to George and his development team about their experiences and ideas for improvement.

Initial testing was limited to 150 users who were issued BRICE-loaded iPads. They used it every day during the first test phase. Seventy-eight percent of users said the tool reduced their travel time by one to two hours per job and said the tool was easy to use.

Preliminary costs savings are estimated at about \$8,500 per year, per maintainer, according to Christopher W. Butigieg, AFRC logistics program manager.

George said he and his development team need the talents of Davis-Monthan's Airmen on the ground to make BRICE

a viable solution for the entire Air Force. He encouraged Reserve Citizen Airmen to not only provide their ideas and experiences, but also to learn code and write their own applications in the future.

The team said new applications should be fast and simple and should do only one or two tasks extremely well. The goal is to have Airmen ready and equipped with the tools they need completely mobile and secure.

"My job is to leverage data," George said. "The right data leads to the right decision, and this team at Davis-Monthan is crucial to me and my team in getting this app right."

He praised the members of the 924th

AMXS for their hard work. "You are our future," he said. "You will optimize our Air Force and I thank you for your insight and your service."

The 924th FG is a geographically separated unit of the 944th Fighter Wing, located at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. The unit-equipped fighter group is responsible for half of the Air Force's A-10 pilot training mission. The Total Force effort at Davis-Monthan includes active and classic associations with the active-duty Air Force's 355th Wing, including the 355th Fighter Group and the 355th Maintenance Group.

(Mingledorff is assigned to the 355th Wing public affairs office.) ■

*Airman First Class Jerry Olivan, 924th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, works on an A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft. The 924th was recently selected to beta-test the new Battle Record Information Core Environment app for maintainers. (Tech. Sgt. Courtney Richardson)*



# Hitting Herculean Heights

## Resilient leader at Youngstown reaches C-130 milestone

By Eric M. White

*Lt. Col. Barry “JR” Cupples, a navigator with the 910th Airlift Wing, Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, shows a new tattoo commemorating his 10,000th C-130 flight hour. (Eric M. White)*



Lt. Col. Barry Cupples, known around Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, as “JR,” rolls back his flight suit sleeve, still dripping with water from the hose-down he received upon stepping through the aircrew door a few minutes earlier.

His fellow 910th Operations Group members cheer as he reveals a black-inked C-130H Hercules aircraft tattoo on his forearm with “10,000 Hours” emblazoned above it.

In many ways, this flight was fairly normal—clear blue skies, a tactical route through the Blue Ridge Mountains of Tennessee, the headset-muffled rumble of the Hercules’ four turboprop engines—but for Cupples, it was among the most significant he’s flown. The navigator, assigned to the 757th Airlift Squadron, flew his 10,000th C-130 hour in early April.

Cupples enlisted in the Air Force Reserve while a senior in high school. He dreamed of becoming a pilot, following in the footsteps of his father, Lt. Col. Barry Cupples Sr., but first needed a college degree. So he enlisted as a loadmaster, responsible for loading and securing cargo and passengers before and during Air Force flights.

After basic military training and loadmaster school at Little

*Cupples holds a 10,000 hours sign in the flight deck of a C-130H Hercules aircraft for a photo at the exact moment he completed his 10,000th C-130 flight hour. (Courtesy photo)*



Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, Cupples was assigned to his father’s home unit, the 328th Airlift Squadron, at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, New York. That’s where his aviation career began.

Cupples recalls his first flight out of Niagara.

“I remember, because it was a tactical training sortie, and I was flying with a Vietnam era pilot who was very aggressive,” said Cupples. “And having just come from school at Little Rock, I wasn’t used to the flying. I remember being in the back thinking that was the first time I was going to get sick, because he was flying very aggressively.”

During the next seven years, Cupples accrued approximately 2,500 flight hours as a loadmaster on both C-130As and C-130Es, models much older than the C-130Hs flown out of Youngstown Air Reserve Station.

He was getting ready to graduate from college and planning his next career steps. His dream of becoming a pilot was thwarted when he learned his eyesight wasn’t good enough and that it couldn’t be waived. Intent on serving his country from the C-130’s flight deck rather than its cargo area, Cupples changed courses slightly, deciding to become a navigator. Navigators are trained to safely route Air Force aircraft in a variety of conditions, including combat, using maps and charts, GPS, visual landmarks, radar and other tools.

Cupples went to Officer Training School in 1990 and earned his navigator wings in 1992. His career continued as a navigator at Niagara ARS until 2017. A mission change at Niagara saw an aircraft change from C-130s to KC-135s, which don’t require navigators.

The change left Cupples with a difficult decision. He could remain at Niagara for the few remaining years before his retirement, but he’d have to take a non-flying position. Alternatively, he could relocate to a C-130 unit. He found an Air Reserve Technician navigator spot at Youngstown and jumped at the opportunity to pursue his love of aviation until the end of his career.



Lt. Col. Jeff Shaffer is the commander of the 910th Operations Group at Youngstown ARS and also serves as a C-130 navigator.

“There are milestones for aircrew members where you can change out the number above your Air Force Reserve patch, indicating the number of hours you’ve flown,” said Shaffer. “The first is 1,000, then 3,000, 5,000, 7,500 and finally 10,000.”

As Cupples’ career has progressed, his flying hours have dwindled some, so achieving 10,000 hours wasn’t really on his radar until last fall. He was averaging a few hundred flight hours a year, but a deployment gave him a significant jump.

“I got 200 hours on a deployment last fall and realized 10,000 hours might be attainable,” said Cupples.

As the number drew nearer, he realized he’d hit the milestone on a paratrooper drop sortie during the April unit training assembly, when the majority of the 910th Airlift Wing’s Reserve Citizen Airmen are at Youngstown ARS for training. The paratrooper requestor ended up cancelling, so the aircrew took the opportunity to fly some local training sorties, and Cupples was prepared. He printed a sign that said, “10,000 hours,” for a mid-flight photo opportunity to commemorate the event. His fellow aircrew members on the ground, however, had bigger plans.

Upon landing, Cupples was greeted by a crowd of 910th personnel, several of whom had water-filled fire extinguishers to give him a celebratory hose-down after de-boarding the aircraft, a tradition usually reserved for the final flight of an aviator’s career.

“It was far above what I expected,” Cupples said, referring to the greeting party. “When I got back I did not expect the reception I got.”

The greeting he received is an indicator of the respect he’s earned as a master of his craft and that his wingmen know how rare it is to achieve what Cupples has done. The C-130 is a tactical aircraft, meaning its missions are usually short, one to three-hour local flights to deliver cargo or personnel. It’s more common for aircrew members who fly strategic airlift aircraft



like the C-5 Galaxy or C-17 Globemaster to achieve such a high number of flight hours, as their sorties can often have double digit lengths.

To put it into perspective, if you boarded an aircraft on April 11, 2019, and started flying, it would take you until the morning of June 1, 2020 to gain 10,000 hours of flight time. Only a handful of aircrew members from the 910th OG, three or four by some counts, have achieved the milestone.

Getting to such a high number is hard, if not impossible, only flying sorties from a home station. Cupples has gone on multiple deployments which helped bring his number up. He said that has been one of the biggest challenges in his Air Force career.

“For every hour, obviously, it’s time away from the family,” said Cupples.

Every flight hour also requires two to three hours of mission planning and debriefing, so the time commitment adds up quickly.

Cupples’ coworkers and peers speak highly of his record and mission contributions.

“He’s a hard worker, always on point, always on task,” said Shaffer. “One of our best instructors, great at teaching the young kids.”

As Cupples trains the next generation of aircrew members, hard work and a can-do attitude are traits he hopes to pass along.

“There’s a lot of times along the way people tell you that you can’t do it,” he said. “Anything’s attainable if you work hard enough for it.”

Cupples poses for a photo with Col. Joe Janik, 910th AW commander, after completing his historic flight. (Staff Sgt. Jeff Grossi)



# Disaster Averted

## Reserve Citizen Airman helps save space station from flying debris

By Staff Sgt. Laura Turner

*Staff Sgt. Christian Ramos is a human space flight orbital safety analyst assigned to the 9th Combat Operations Squadron, Vandenberg Air Force Base, California. (Staff Sgt. Laura Turner)*



When a missile launched by India destroyed a low-orbit Indian satellite during a test in April, it sent more than 400 pieces of debris spiraling toward the International Space Station and the astronauts on board.

The potential for loss of life and destroyed space assets was avoided thanks to Reserve Citizen Airmen like Staff Sgt. Christian Ramos and the team of analysts who ensured the safety of those astronauts during the event.

“My responsibility was making sure none of those objects would collide with the International Space Station and the six astronauts who live there,” Ramos said. “Human space flight orbital safety analysts, like me, are in charge of conjunction assessment for the ISS and all the astronaut visiting vehicles.”

As a civilian, Ramos works for the NASA Johnson Space Flight Center writing code for programs used by the Human Space Flight cell in the 18th Space Control Squadron. On Reserve weekends, Ramos works for the 9th

Combat Operations Squadron, the Reserve component to the Combined Space Operations Center and the 18th SPCS at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California.

“Staff Sgt. Ramos’ experience working with NASA as a civilian has helped develop him,” said Master Sgt. Robert Levins, the 9th COS training flight chief. “He’s reduced the HSF yearly workload by more than 265 hours and increased advanced space situational awareness.”

The position Ramos holds at his Reserve unit is typically manned by high-ranking government civilians or officers. He is the first and only enlisted member in the position due to his experience on the civilian side.

“This has given the 9th COS a greater ability to maintain continuity and train our senior leaders for space flight safety,” Levins said. “Ramos’ unparalleled level of expertise has also raised the bar for other space operators across the wing.”

Ramos is a prime example of how the Reserve utilizes civilian talents to

implement best practices and discover new ways of operating better.

Ramos’ father worked for the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory. When the younger Ramos was in grade school, his father would take him to the lab and show him some of the rockets his team was working on. This got Ramos interested in how orbital mechanics worked.

When Ramos was in college, he worked at a local restaurant stuffing burritos before having the urge to pursue the love of space he had developed as a child. After meeting with a local recruiter and making the transition from civilian to Reserve Citizen Airman, he reflected on the impact it has had on his life.

“Being a Reservist has given me so many opportunities,” he said. “I never would have imagined I would go from making burritos and tacos to protecting astronauts for NASA and the Air Force.”

*(Turner is assigned to the 310th Space Wing public affairs office at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado.)*

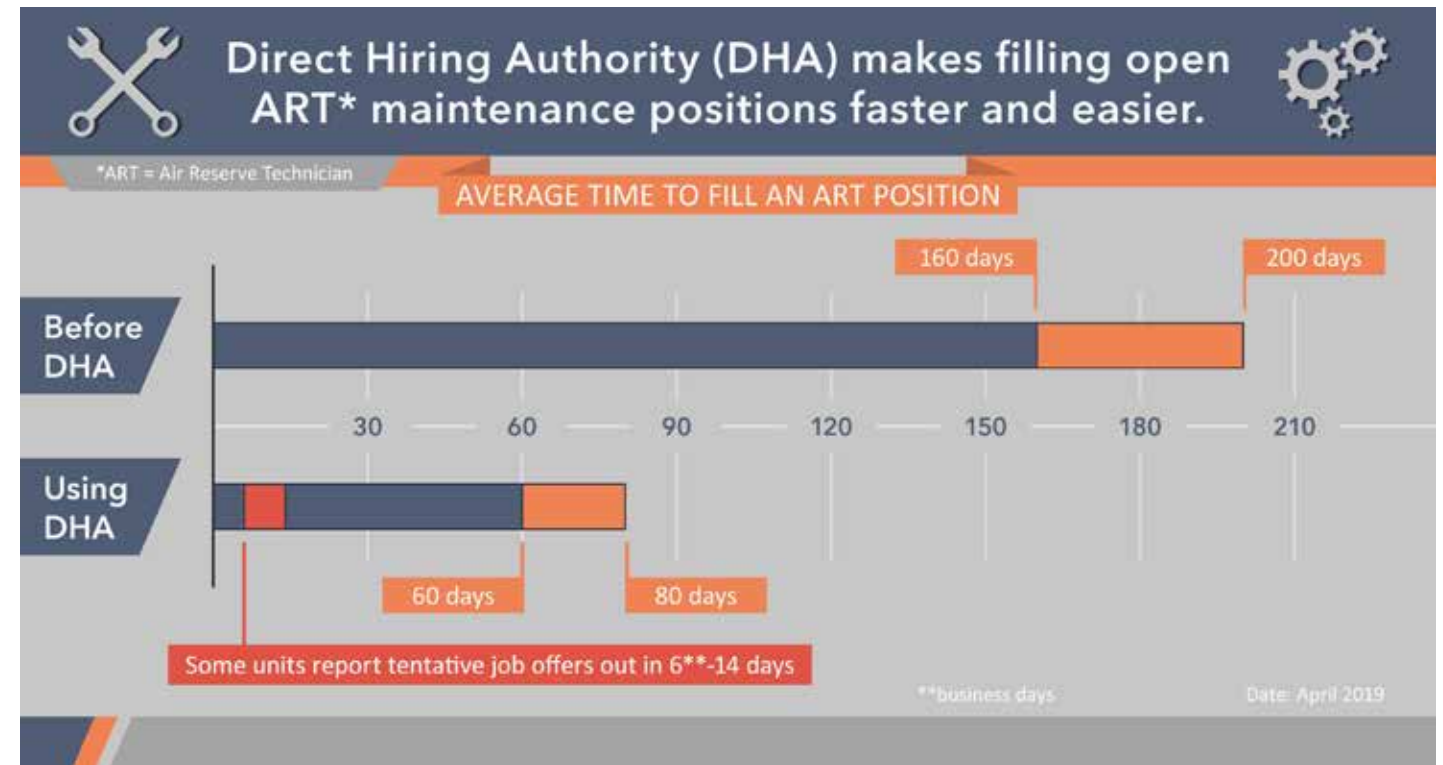




# Air Force Reserve expands hiring authority to recruit, maintain readiness

By Tyler Grimes

*Senior Airman Daniel Phillis, an aerospace propulsion helper from the 910th Airlift Wing, Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, works on a C-130H Hercules aircraft. Air Force Reserve Command is expanding the direct hiring authority to recruit Air Reserve Technician maintenance personnel when and where they are needed. (Eric M. White)*



To meet the needs of America's national security requirements, the Air Force Reserve Command is expanding the direct hiring authority to recruit Air Reserve Technician maintenance personnel when and where they are needed.

"Direct Hire Authority (DHA) enables DoD to recruit and appoint qualified persons directly without applying competitive rating and ranking procedures," states a Nov. 27, 2018 Department of Defense letter.

Lisa Armes, chief, Staffing, Affirmative Employment for AFRC's Directorate of Manpower, Personnel and Services, known as A1, explains that DHA makes filling open positions faster and easier.

"Feedback from our units indicates there are traditional Reservists interested in applying for ART positions, but might not make the referral certificate due to lack of deployment or other experience-based issues," Armes said. "DHA allows the hiring official to make selections without the need of a referral certificate and thus opens up the ART opportunities to qualified traditional Reservists more easily."

With approximately 1,600 vacancies across the maintenance career fields, using DHA is a great way to reduce that large number, according to Armes. Additionally, Armes said it takes between 160 to 200 days on average to fill an ART position. However, DHA enables hiring officials to bring someone on board in a much shorter time period.

"One unit submitted their first DHA package and their applicant received a tentative job offer within 14 days," she said. "Another unit's submission had a tentative job offer in six business days. If units are hiring their experienced traditional Reservists, this is happening in 60 to 80 days as compared to the previous 160 to 200 days."

In order for the Air Force Personnel Center to adjust to the new DHA workload, units were selected to have DHA priority until April 30. The list consists of maintenance units at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona; Nellis AFB, Nevada; Carswell AFB, Texas; Hill AFB, Utah; Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida; Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona; Pittsburgh Air Reserve Station, Pennsylvania; Beale AFB, California; Tinker AFB, Oklahoma; Barksdale AFB, Louisiana; Joint Base Andrews, Maryland; March ARB, California; and Grissom ARB, Indiana.

These units were selected based on a combination of factors, including manning rates. After April 30, all units will have equal priority in submitting and processing their packages through the hiring system. This priority only applies to maintenance DHA. It does not apply to ART officer recruitment or ART enlisted recruitment that is not covered by the maintenance DHA.

Maj. Monica Lombardo, chief of Maintenance Force Management for AFRC's Directorate of Logistics, Engineering and Force Protection, known as A4, says the new DHA flexibility is not just good for the maintenance but also good for the entire Reserve enterprise and the mission.

"Really, this policy is not just a good thing for A4, since hiring more maintainers enables increased aircraft availability and mission capable rates," Lombardo said. "More flyable aircraft translates to more pilot training and combat readiness on the operational side."

Lombardo said the feedback from the Reserve units has been very positive about DHA. One reason the DHA implementation has been so successful, she says, is unit leadership involvement and collaboration with AFRC A1.





## Help the Reserve team grow by helping others

By Master Sgt. Chance Babin

Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service is going all in with a new peer referral campaign called Share Your Adventure that is replacing the command's Get1Now campaign.

The peer referral program is the lead source generator for AFRC RS with one of four people referred by current Reservists joining the Air Force Reserve.

As manning levels continue to increase for AFRC and other branches of service and the nation's economy continues to be strong, Share Your Adventure is a vital program to help recruiters gather quality leads and assure AFRC has the manning it needs to excel in its mission to fly, fight and win.

"Share Your Adventure gives Reservists the opportunity to share their story and Air Force Reserve experiences with family, friends and coworkers," said Chief Master Sgt. Michael Johnson, RS chief of advertising. "People are compelled by individual testimonies. When they hear a peer sharing amazing stories and benefits about the Air Force Reserve, they can imagine themselves having those same opportunities. Share Your Adventure allows Reservists to help friends, family and coworkers achieve success."

The peer referral program process starts

with an actively participating Reservist or Reserve civilian employee sharing his or her experiences with a friend, family member or coworker. If the person is interested, the Reservist then inputs the referral's information into the Share Your Adventure program via website or mobile phone app. Reservists can create an account at any time on the website or app.

"The referral will be contacted by a qualification center E-advisor who will then go over the qualifications and prequalify the referral," Johnson said. "If qualified, the E-advisor will give the referral the contact information for a recruiter who covers his or her zone. Referrals will also be given the option to be transferred to the recruiter at that time."

Once the referral meets with the recruiter and is qualified, the Reservist who submitted the lead is sent a message that the lead is qualified and the Reservist is prompted to pick an award from the awards section.

"The thought process behind the name change from Get1Now to Share Your Adventure is that Get1Now sounded like we wanted Reservists to go out and find people," Johnson said. "What we really want is for Reservists to share their stories, become that testimony and assist

others who need the opportunities the Air Force Reserve has to offer."

One of the advantages of using the Share Your Adventure app is that Reservists often don't have recruiting contact information on hand.

"This app gives them a tool to use when someone they share their experience with wants to go further with the process and talk to a recruiter," Johnson said. "Reservists now have a way at all times to get a referral started with their Air Force Reserve experience."

Share Your Adventure will have a new look and awards.

"We have added wireless ear buds, a virtual reality headset for smart phones, a smoothie blender, a toolkit, an Echo Dot and a personal safe," he said. "We will have marketing specialists visiting units during unit training assembly weekends to engage with Reservists on the program as well as to encourage them to download the app and register."

Johnson encouraged Reservists who submit a qualifying lead to claim their SYA prize, saying only about 33 percent of Reservists who have submitted a qualifying lead this year have selected an award.

"I believe most people refer individuals to the Air Force Reserve because they truly believe the Air Force Reserve is an awesome opportunity and they want to help share this experience with others," he said.

Actively participating Reservists or Air Force Reserve civilian employees are eligible to take part in SYA. AFRC Recruiting Service employees and their family members are not eligible.

If you currently have the Get1Now app on your phone, it will still work with the relaunch.

For information on how to sign up for Share Your Adventure, go to [shareyouradventure.us](http://shareyouradventure.us) and click on "register your account here." You can also go to the Apple Store on iPhone or Google Play Store on Android and search for "Share Your Adventure Peer Referral Program" to download the app and get registered there.

*(Babin is noncommissioned officer in charge of public affairs for the AFRC Recruiting Service.)*



## Looking Into the Future

### Strategic group laying the groundwork for the Air Force Reserve in 2035

By Bo Joyner

What should the Air Force Reserve look like in 2035? That's the question nearly 50 subject matter experts from across the Air Force Reserve team are focusing on throughout 2019.

The Air Force Reserve Future Force Framework, commonly referred to as AF3, is a year-long project directed by Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee, Air Force Reserve Command commander, to reform the organization's priorities and develop a strategic framework for the command.

"The Air Force Reserve must get ready now for the future fight," Scobee said. "We're relying on the AF3 team to provide us with a picture of what the Air Force Reserve of the future is going to look like and what we are going to have to do today to meet the challenges of 2035 and beyond."

The AF3 working group is comprised of people from each AFRC numbered air force, the Air Reserve Personnel Center, all AFRC directorates, and the Reserve headquarters staff. Members have been divided into three subgroups: recruiting and retention, readiness and utilization, and future environmental factors.

The group will look to challenge today's operational and organizational paradigms to determine the best way to leverage Reserve Citizen Airmen strengths and provide the best value to the nation in the profession of arms.

"Nothing is off the table," Scobee said. "It's vital we get this right now so we have the right policy, planning and programming efforts in place to get to where we need to be in the future."

AF3 members are currently studying what the Air Force Reserve has done historically from a recruiting, retention, readiness and utilization perspective. Members are also looking at future societal, technological and global environment trends, Air Force and joint plans, and what Air Force Reserve strengths

and criteria might look like in the future as they create their framework.

"Not only do we need to understand the future environment we need to be prepared for, but we also need to learn from our past to better inform a future Air Force Reserve," said Lt. Col. Alison Hamel, AF3 project lead.

From a recruiting and retention standpoint, the group has begun by researching factors that historically impact recruiting and retention efforts, like operational tempo, pay statuses, hiring authorities and the balance between family, civilian employer and military obligations. The intent is to clarify tendencies and potentials for drawing and keeping Reserve Citizen Airmen.

Among the questions being explored by the readiness and utilization subgroup, two examples are: what units have historically done well or poorly in regards to readiness and why, and how has the active duty utilized the Reserve?

The future environmental factors group is looking at a host of factors, including what the lifestyle of working age Americans will look like in 2035, what kinds of jobs Americans will be doing in the future and how the Air Force will fight in the years ahead. "The Reserve needs AF3 to help us prioritize how we will get after the National Defense Strategy objectives and stay in sync with the Air Force," said Col. Carl Magnussen, AFRC plans division chief.

At the May working group, the team put historical and future estimate information together to begin brainstorming draft recommendations for the Air Force Reserve in 2035. In November, AF3 results will be briefed to AFRC senior leaders.

*(Information for this article was taken from an article written by Maj. Jonathan Lee, Headquarters Air Force Reserve Strategy and Planning Division.)*







*Lt. Col. Asan Bui, 920th Communications Flight commander, holds a photo of his late father, Chien Van Bui at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. The lieutenant colonel is now a part of the 920th Rescue Wing, a combat-search-and-rescue unit in the Air Force Reserve. (Senior Airman Brandon Kalloo Sanes)*

# Against All Odds

## Comms flight commander has come a long way from South Vietnam

By Senior Airman Brandon Kalloo Sanes

*(Editor's note: Identifying, developing and retaining resilient leaders is essential to the success of the Air Force Reserve. Lt. Col. Asan Bui is a resilient leader assigned to the 920th Rescue Wing, Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. This is his story.)*

Asan Bui was born at sea 44 years ago. Adrift in the ocean aboard a wooden boat, Bui's father and expectant mother found themselves pitted against all odds along with their five children, ages 2 to 11.

Now a lieutenant colonel and commander in the Air Force Reserve, Bui explained that his parents were South Vietnamese refugees fleeing political persecution and the possibility of death at the end of the Vietnam War.

After a lengthy, bloody conflict in Southeast Asia, communist-led combatants overran American-backed South Vietnamese military forces on April 30, 1975, in what is known as the Fall of Saigon. The event triggered a mass exodus of approximately 1.6 million refugees who fled the region for fear of retribution.

Bui explained that his father, Chien Van Bui, a South Vietnamese soldier in



*Left: Bui addresses his family and friends during his assumption of command ceremony at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, on July 14, 2018. The event recognized the transition of power as Bui became the 920th Communications Flight commander. (Senior Airman Brandon Kalloo Sanes) Right: Chien Van Bui, an artilleryman in the South Vietnam army relays artillery rounds during the Vietnam War. Bui's current unit can trace its roots back to the Vietnam War. (Courtesy photo provided by Lt. Col. Asan Bui)*



the 232nd Artillery, wanted to stay behind and fight for the land he knew and loved. However, with the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong advancing, the father of five, with a sixth on the way, was forced to make a life-altering decision – either flee the beloved country he fought for or stay behind and risk losing his family.

“Anyone who fought alongside the United States would be killed or imprisoned in reeducation camps,” the lieutenant colonel said. “I have personally spoken with individuals who have gone through this brutal ordeal and survived. Some were not released for more than a decade and still carry the traumatic scars.”

Those who suffered in these camps endured hard manual labor, intended to forcibly change their personal and political beliefs.

With the clock ticking, the Bui family carefully slipped away from their coastal village in a small fishing boat. They drifted into the vast South China Sea, anxious about the future and worried about threats of piracy and unpredictable weather. Adding to their stress, supplies were limited and the boat was filled well beyond capacity with extended family and friends.

“There wasn’t enough food or water,” Bui said, explaining the predicament as

told by his family. “We were floating in the ocean for four days before being spotted by a helicopter crew, which relayed our location to a U.S. military vessel, initiating the rescue.”

Shortly thereafter, his mother went into labor, giving birth on the very ship that saved the family from near death. They eventually docked at a staging area near Camp Asan, Guam, where refugees were processed for resettlement within the United States.

Bui’s parent’s affectionately named him after the camp.

Bui has come a long way since that difficult beginning. He now commands the communications flight within the 920th Rescue Wing, a combat search-and-rescue unit located at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. The unit is also tasked with peacetime missions and most recently supported hurricane relief operations in the Carolinas after Hurricane Florence and the Florida Panhandle after Hurricane Michael.

He has served 19 years in the Air Force, with experience in several fields, including acquisitions, cyber and special operations, all while spending countless hours volunteering for his church and community. He said he plans on doing more in the future.

“We started out very poor and experienced discrimination early on,” Bui said. “But my father had faith, never quit and led from the front. These qualities were essential to our survival and have been with me through my career.”

A couple of American families sponsored his family when they first arrived. He said their help was critical because they provided food, housing and other invaluable resources, jumpstarting their new lives.

“I want to honor those (military members and sponsors) who have sacrificed so much for my family and the Vietnamese refugees, especially the Vietnam veterans. I hope to return the favor by reinvesting in this nation,” he said.

He said military service and philanthropy are his ways of paying back those who helped him and his family along the way.

“This country will provide you with opportunities, but you have to take ownership and responsibility. Then you have to run with it.

“My father ran with it.”  
*(Sanes is assigned to the 920th Rescue Wing public affairs office.)*





# Leveraging Civilian Talents

## Miami architect, project engineer helps Homestead tackle entry control complex issues

By Maj. Roxy Hambleton

*Staff Sgt. Luiz Vicentini, an engineering technician with the 482nd Civil Engineering Squadron, and an architect and project engineer in his civilian career, has provided invaluable assistance to Homestead Air Reserve Base's new state-of-the-art entry control complex. (Tech. Sgt. Ben Hayes)*



Under Air Force Reserve Command Commander Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee's plans to reform the organization, the Air Force Reserve is exploring innovative ways to leverage industry and civilian talents to implement best practices and discover new ways of operating better.

A Reserve Citizen Airman assigned to the 482nd Fighter Wing at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida, recently used his experience as an architect and project engineer in his civilian career to help the base with a critical construction project.

Homestead is currently constructing a state-of-the-art entry control complex projected to be operational in late 2019. Base civil engineer specialists have worked with Air Force Reserve Command headquarters, the Army Corps of Engineers and several local government agencies during this \$11 million construction project, which involved annexing county land adjacent to the current front gate.

The entry control complex will enable the base to comply with more stringent force protection standards that better protect



*Vicentini looks over plans for the new entry control complex. (Tech. Sgt. Ben Hayes)*

personnel and the mission they perform.

The complex had faced numerous delays, mainly due to the slow pace of multiple government organizations working together. Because military construction funds expire after a given time period, Homestead was approaching a critical point on the schedule that was putting completion of the project at risk.

That's when Staff Sgt. Luiz Vicentini, an engineering technician with the 482nd Civil Engineer Squadron, stepped in.

Vicentini was able to use his civilian experience with the city of Miami to guide the Army Corps of Engineers and its subcontractors through the intricate steps of the permit submittal and approval process. He was also able to preview documentation provided to county engineers and managers to ensure the greatest chance of success in the shortest possible time.

"Without his involvement, quick identification of potential issues and ability to offer and implement solutions, the cost and schedule for this critical project would have been impacted," Lt. Col. Scott McPherson, the 482nd FW base civil engineer, said. "We certainly are glad to have him on our team."

Born and raised in Brazil, Vicentini moved to the United States at age 23 to begin work on his master's degree. Concurrently with his graduate studies, Vicentini worked in a restaurant as a server, was married and started raising a family, and also freelanced as a drafter for various companies in the local area.

"Those were hard times, but you have to work hard to get ahead," said Vicentini, who was granted U.S. citizenship seven years later.

In 2009, Vicentini decided to join the military because he wanted to give back to the country that provided him so many opportunities. He read an article about the Air National Guard and realized he could work at his civilian job and still be in the military. He joined the ANG in Massachusetts as a knowledge operations management Airman assigned to Otis ANG Base.

He then asked to transfer to the civil engineer squadron, received his training as an engineering technician and accepted an Active Guard Reserve position at Otis. In that position, he

served as the contracting officer representative as well as the construction manager for the 300-acre military installation.

A job opportunity in 2014 brought the Vicentini family to Florida. The job, as a city planner for the city of Miami, entails reviewing plans, rezoning, issuing warrants for projects and more. He also approves amendments and conducts briefings for planning and zoning appeals boards.

When Vicentini moved to Miami, he called the local recruiter who connected him with the 482nd CES superintendent. Within four months, he was transferred to the 482nd CES.

Vicentini has now set his sights on becoming an Air Force officer.

"It has been a dream of mine to be an officer in the Air Force," he said. "It would be the epitome of my military career to be able to use the skills I have in an engineering capacity for the 482nd."

With his architecture degree in hand, Vicentini took the Air Force Officer Qualifying Test and applied through the Deserving Airman Commissioning Program for a position as an engineer with the civil engineer squadron.

McPherson, who had been working with Vicentini on the entry control complex, highly recommended him for commissioning.

Vicentini is awaiting an Officer Training School date from the Air Force Personnel Center. After commissioning, he plans on returning to the squadron as a second lieutenant and engineer.

"Staff Sgt. Vicentini's story encompasses both the American dream and a military success story," said Col. David Biggs, the 482nd Mission Support Group commander. "He worked hard and rose through the ranks both professionally and militarily. We certainly appreciate his work on the entry control complex and look forward to his contributions as an engineer and officer in the group and in the wing."

*(Hambleton is assigned to the 482nd Force Support Squadron.)* ■





# Our Secrets Can Kill Us

## What Reserve Citizen Airmen should know about adverse childhood experiences

By Col. (Dr.) Mario Tommasi

*(Editor's note: Air Force Reserve Command is committed to developing resilient leaders. In this article, Tommasi discusses how adverse childhood experiences can impact a person's resiliency and overall health. Tommasi is an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to Defense Health Headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia, where he is working on psychological health plans and policies.)*

Our secrets can kill us. That was the premise behind a study conducted by a team of medical researchers at Kaiser Permanente, the large American health care organization headquartered in Oakland, California.

The research found life-threatening and chronic health conditions like heart disease, emphysema, drug abuse and suicidal behavior were associated with a patient's personal history of abuse and other adverse experiences during childhood.

The basis of the research was that adult survivors often cover up the emotional pain and shame common among abuse victims by engaging in health-compromising behaviors such as smoking, unhealthy eating, misuse of alcohol and addictive substances, and other poor lifestyle choices. When left unchecked, these health-damaging behaviors lead toward the development of chronic problems in physical and emotional wellbeing.

I will tell you more about the study later in this article; but for now, I want to let you know about a recent project I worked on as an Air Force psychologist.

Not too long ago, I was on an expert panel convened to investigate suicides among Reserve Citizen Airmen. Panel members combed through folders of investigative reports, career briefs, personal accounts and other documents trying to make sense of the circumstances surrounding these deaths.

The panel also interviewed supervisors and coworkers to shed light on the deceased's struggles and concerns. After five days of confidential and sobering work, the panel completed its evaluations. Formal conclusions are forthcoming. But it's not premature to suggest that alcohol misuse, persistent relationship issues, untreated mental health problems and easy access to firearms

were prominent concerns.

These inferences make sense because it's intuitive that firearms and alcohol neither mix nor combine to support emotional wellness.

There was another apparent finding however, that although did not rise to the level of a bonafide trend, nonetheless seemed to me to be an important issue. There were indicators that some deceased service members had endured abuse during childhood.

There are many forms of child abuse, including caregiver neglect, physical harm, sexual violation, emotional cruelty and exploitation. People who experience child abuse are two to three times more likely to die by suicide than unaffected people. But there are other childhood experiences that might also be deleterious to a person's wellbeing.

Common among these are parental death, caregiver psychiatric disorders, family violence and caregiver involvement in the legal system.

Of course, not everyone experiencing these sorts of adverse experiences during childhood goes on to die by suicide as an adult. In fact, most survivors find ways to thrive into adulthood. But what seems well established in the literature on human development is that when childhood traumatic experiences are endured repeatedly, are severe and persist over extended periods – and they aren't countered with helping interventions – identifiable changes in emotional growth and maturity occurs. In severe cases of abuse, development is stunted and the result is debilitating reductions in the growing youth's ability to regulate emotions, express him or herself, think and learn to his or her potential, and cope with challenges of everyday life.

To test their theory, the researchers at Kaiser Permanente sponsored a prevalence study in the mid-1990s that examined the relationship between adult health status and recollections of adverse childhood experiences.

The study used a survey called the Adverse Childhood Experience questionnaire to ask about the adult patient's recollection



of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, parent drug abuse and violence, and criminal activity.

Researchers added up the number of endorsements to these experiences to compute a respondent's ACE score. The higher the ACE score the greater the number of endorsed recollections of adverse experiences.

The study correlated the ACE scores to various health indicators such as quality of life, health care utilization, death and smoking rates, obesity, physical inactivity, depressed mood, suicide attempts, alcoholism, drug abuse, lifetime number of sexual partners, and history of sexually transmitted diseases.

Also examined in the study were a patient's history of ischemic heart disease, cancer, stroke and chronic pulmonary dysfunction.

The findings were sobering. Two out of three people had an ACE score of at least one, more than 20 percent reported ACE scores of three, and about 13 percent of patients had ACE scores of four or more.

The findings indicated the higher the ACE score, the more likely the respondent had risk factors for several of the leading causes of deaths in adults.

People with an ACE score of four had more than twice the risk for hepatitis, emphysema or chronic bronchitis, and sexually transmitted diseases. Additionally, people with high ACE scores were twice as likely to smoke cigarettes, seven times more likely to be alcoholic, and 10 times more likely to have injected street drugs.

Patients with high ACE scores are more likely to be violent, and have more marriages, broken bones, drug prescriptions, depression, autoimmune diseases and work absences.

And, most relevant to my work on the panel, was that people with high ACE scores were 12 times more likely to have attempted suicide.

So what does all this mean to you?

The patients in the ACE study were not all that different from

you, me and our families. Participants were American citizens who routinely visit healthcare clinics for medical and wellness problems – just like us.

Therefore, the findings from the ACE study suggest Reserve Citizen Airmen struggling with emotional or health problems may have had adverse childhood experiences. The long-ago secrets they have never told anyone about still affects their day-to-day life.

At this point, you might want to know your ACE score. I'll tell you how to get it at the end of this article. But first, I want to explain a single ACE score, in and of itself, should not be over-interpreted. It does not matter if it is lower or higher than the figures mentioned in this article. The study aggregated average ACE scores for nearly 10,000 people and does not reflect the uniqueness of any single person.

Moreover, your ACE score does not cause you to have health or wellness problems. Instead, your ACE score might reveal a little-told part of your personal story and in so doing help explain why you might be struggling with health problems or thoughts of suicide.

If a secret from your past is causing you stress, I want you to know that you can get help. The first step is to share your secret with a professional. Your chaplain or director of psychological health are professionals with experience in helping survivors. As one chaplain recently told me, "we all have burdens, but we don't have to carry them alone."

If you want to read more about the ACE study and compute your ACE score, point your internet browser to the SAMHSA website devoted to this topic: <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/practicing-effective-prevention/prevention-behavioral-health/adverse-childhood-experiences>. ■



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